

SUPREME COURT OF IOWA

Response to Final Report of the Equality in the Courts Task Force

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I. BACKGROUND.

By an order dated September 4, 1990, the Iowa Supreme Court established the Equality in the Courts Task Force. The mission of the task force was to investigate both race and gender bias in the Iowa court system. While other states have studied gender bias and racial or ethnic bias separately, this study was the first to investigate both race and gender bias in the same study.

The courts' commitment to diversity was reflected in the membership of the task force. Fourteen of the twenty-nine members were women. Seven represented racial/ethnic minorities. Various sectors of the legal community were represented: eight members were judges, twelve members were practicing attorneys, and two members were court administrators. From the community at large came two state legislators, three academics, and two individuals from private industry.

The court gave the task force a three-pronged mandate:

1. To investigate bias—particularly on the basis of race or gender—which may exist in the court system and its effect upon the judicial process and participants;
2. To collect the information received and make findings with regard to any existing bias;
3. To submit a report to the Supreme Court, including the task force's findings and its recommendations of means to heighten awareness and to increase the sensitivity of court participants to forms of bias, and eliminate bias which may demean participants or affect the prospect of equal treatment.

To gather data, the task force conducted four major surveys, directed at judges, attorneys, court personnel and the general public. This research offers a complicated portrait of practices and interactions in the Iowa court system. There is strong evidence that most participants have confidence in the basic fairness of the Iowa courts and do not see the problems of race and gender bias as either overwhelming or intractable. The **Final Report** of the task force acknowledges that, in most instances of the day-to-day court procedures and practice of law, biased conduct is not evident, and that most attorneys and judges rarely, if ever, exhibit overtly or intentionally biased conduct. Nevertheless, there is no question that some quantum of race and gender bias exists.

In distilling these problems and concerns, three themes stand out from the wealth of data amassed and analyzed by the task force. First, women and minorities are significantly under represented in important sectors of the profession and in positions of influence affecting the court system. Second, the demographics influence the experience of men and women and whites and minorities in their interactions in the courtroom and other professional settings. Not unexpectedly, one consistent finding in the various task force studies is that gender and race bias poses a greater problem for women and minorities than for white men. Third, there is evidence that gender and race may at times negatively affect the interest of certain classes of litigants, e.g., domestic violence victims, minority defendants in criminal cases, and ethnic minorities not fluent in English.

The **Final Report** of the task force is broken down into eight major categories: appointments, hiring and advancements; courtroom and professional interactions; language barriers; jury selection; civil damages; domestic relations; domestic abuse; and bias in the criminal system. In all, the task force made more than 120 specific recommendations.

Once the task force filed its **Final Report**, the critical phase of implementation began. The task force recommended that the court assign this responsibility to another special committee, the procedure followed in most states. The court, however, chose not to abdicate its leadership role in such an important undertaking. Instead, a sub-committee composed of three members of the court reviewed the recommendations one by one and proposed implementation strategies for the full court's consideration at its monthly administrative conferences. This process, which took over one year, culminated in the report that follows.

In undertaking this responsibility of implementation, the court was mindful that the problems addressed by the Equality in the Courts Task Force are not static but ongoing. In order to monitor the progress made to date, and alert the court to other issues of racial and gender fairness that may surface on the horizon, the court has now appointed a monitoring committee. This seven-member committee, composed of both lawyers and laypersons, will carry on upon the filing of this report.

II. APPOINTMENTS, HIRING AND ADVANCEMENTS: PRACTICES AND PERCEPTIONS.

A. The Judicial Application Process.

1. The task force recommended that *"minorities and women should be nominated and appointed to increase their presence in judicial and quasi-judicial positions and progress toward a representational bench."* In response, the court adopted the following statement of policy:

"The Iowa Supreme Court supports the nomination and appointment of minorities and women to judicial and quasi-judicial positions, and views greater racial and gender diversity within the judicial branch as a desired and achievable goal. Our commitment to this objective does not mean, nor require, that we subscribe to a system of quotas. Quality and competence must continue to be the overarching principles guiding the merit selection process."

2. The court adopted a recommendation that judicial nominating commissions and other appointive authorities nominate and appoint persons to the bench on a non-discriminatory basis. In addition, the court directed the state court administrator to bring this recommendation to the attention of nominating commissions at the time of any vacancy and to investigate the possibility of updating the education program for nominating commissioners.
3. The court endorsed the task force recommendation that it continue its policy and practice of including minorities, women, and lay members on judicial and quasi-judicial boards, committees and commissions in Iowa. To implement this recommendation, the court directed the state court administrator to contact organizations representing minorities, women and other lay people to solicit names of persons to serve on supreme court committees. The court shall also consider establishing an application process that enables individuals to volunteer to serve on commissions.

B. Legal Education.

1. The court referred, with a letter of support to law schools within the state, a recommendation that *"law schools should give priority to efforts to recruit and retain minority and female faculty members and law students."*

2. The court also supports a recommendation that law schools *"reinforce their commitments to train attorneys who will be sensitive to and aware of manifestations of discrimination and bias and their effects."*
3. The task force recommended that the Board of Law Examiners be made aware of and review studies showing different bar exam pass rates among men, women, whites and minorities, and determine whether the Iowa bar exam format needs to be reviewed. The court requested the Board of Law Examiners respond to questions concerning administration of the bar exam. The court is now in discussions with the Board about potential changes in administration of the bar examination.
4. The court adopted a recommendation that law school placement offices and law firms work with professional associations, bar associations, and the courts to facilitate the entry of women and minority law students into summer clerkships, judicial clerkships, and other opportunities leading to professional development and permanent employment in Iowa. Opportunities for minorities in clerkships should be encouraged at both the trial and appellate court levels.

C. Hiring and Advancement of Court Employees.

1. The court directed that a summary of the results of both the court administrator's survey and the court employees' survey conducted by the task force be distributed to all district court administrators.
2. The court adopted a revised and updated affirmative action plan for the judicial department. This plan embraces recommendations of the task force that:
 - a. Court administrators take necessary steps to ensure all court employees and minority groups within appropriate communities are made aware of position openings as they occur.
 - b. Employment levels within each county of the judicial department more accurately reflect the minority labor force within each county.

- c. Women and minorities have more representation in administrative and supervisory positions at all levels.
- 3. The court directed the state court administrator to publish in an appropriate form results of the judicial department's biannual **EEO/AA Report** required by federal law. Additional information regarding gender and minority distribution of department employees by pay grade will be published at appropriate intervals.

Efforts by several judicial department managers committed to diversifying their staffs have already led to a significant increase in the employment level of minorities in the judicial department. Since publication of the **Final Report** of the task force in February 1993, minority employment in the judicial department is up 57 percent -- to 43 from 28.

III. COURTROOM AND PROFESSIONAL INTERACTIONS.

A. Training and Education of Lawyers and Judges.

- 1. The court adopted a policy that:

"the impact of race, national origin, ethnicity, and sex on issues related to court system interaction and case or controversy outcome, and professional relationships between attorneys and judges where race, national origin, ethnicity, or sex is a potential factor are issues that should be regular subjects offered to attorneys and judges as part of their continuing legal education. Further, the court shall notify the commission on continuing legal education that anti-bias training is an ethical issue for attorneys and judges thereby qualifying such training for credit towards the ethics requirement."
- 2. The court adopted the task force recommendation that the judicial department provide each chief district court judge, all judges, and those persons in quasi-judicial positions, including court related boards and commissions, training regarding their role and significance in ensuring an environment of equal opportunity and fairness.
- 3. The court adopted the task force recommendation that all judicial department personnel receive appropriate training to ensure an environment of equal opportunity and fairness.

4. The court adopted the task force recommendation to actively encourage bar associations to increase anti-bias training and education. In addition, the court directed that appropriate organizations should be notified of this recommendation, as well as the recommendation regarding race, national origin, ethnicity, and sex stated in paragraph 1, above.
5. The court adopted a recommendation that law firms should adopt and implement policies to prohibit sexual harassment and unlawful discrimination on the basis of race, national origin, ethnicity, or sex.

B. Canons and Ethical Considerations.

1. In response to the task force report, the court has amended the **Iowa Code of Judicial Conduct** by adding the following to **Canon 3(A)**:
 - (8) *A judge shall not in the performance of judicial duties by words or conduct manifest bias or prejudice, including but not limited to bias or prejudice based upon sex, race, national origin, or ethnicity, and shall not permit staff, court officials and others subject to the judge's direction and control to do so.*
 - (9) *A judge shall require lawyers in proceedings before the judge to refrain from manifesting, by words or conduct, bias or prejudice based upon sex, race, national origin, or ethnicity, against parties, witnesses, counsel or others. This section does not preclude legitimate advocacy when sex, race, national origin, or ethnicity are issues in the proceeding.*
2. The court amended **Canon 2** of the **Iowa Code of Judicial Conduct** to include the following new paragraph:
 - (C) *A judge shall not hold membership in any organization that the judge knows practices invidious discrimination on the basis of race, sex, religion or national origin.*
3. The court has amended the **Code of Professional Responsibility** to include sexual harassment under the definition of misconduct. Specifically, DR-1-102(A)(7) states that a lawyer shall not "engage

in sexual harassment or other unlawful discrimination on the basis of sex, race, national origin, or ethnicity in the practice of law or knowingly permit staff and agents subject to the lawyer's direction and control to do so."

4. The court has amended the **Code of Professional Conduct** to include a prohibition against sexual relations between attorneys and their clients. New ethical consideration EC5-25 states:

"The unequal balance of power in the attorney-client relationship, rooted in the attorney's special skill and knowledge on the one hand and the client's potential vulnerability on the other, may enable the lawyer to dominate and take unfair advantage. When a lawyer uses this power to initiate a sexual relationship with a client, actual harm to the client, and the client's interest, may result. The over-reaching by an attorney is harmful in any legal representation but presents an even greater danger to the client seeking advice in times of personal crisis, such as divorce, death of a loved one, or when facing criminal charges. Clients may rightfully expect that confidences vouchsafed to the lawyer will be solely used to advance the client's interest, and will not be used to advance the lawyer's interest, sexual or otherwise."

Disciplinary Rule 5-101 has been amended to include the following:

"A lawyer shall not engage in sexual relations with a client, or a representative of a client, unless the person is the spouse of the lawyer or the sexual relationship predates the initiation of the attorney-client relationship. Even in these provisionally-exempt relationships, the attorney should strictly scrutinize his or her behavior for any conflicts of interest to determine if any harm may result to the client or to their representation. If there is any reasonable possibility that the legal representation of the client may be impaired, or the client harmed by the continuation of the sexual relationship, the attorney should immediately withdraw from the legal representation."

5. The court has complied with the task force recommendation that the **Code of Professional Responsibility for Lawyers** and the **Code of Judicial Conduct** be revised so that all language contained therein is gender neutral. The court shall also amend to the extent not already done so all court rules, procedures, etc., so that all language is gender neutral.
6. The court decided that once a monitoring committee for the task force report is established, an evaluation should be done to determine if there is a need for a study of the existence of bias based on religion, disability, age, sexual orientation or socio-economic status.

C. Boards, Commissions and Appointments.

1. The court reiterated its position on the nomination and appointment of women and minorities as outlined in II(A)(1) above.
2. The court reiterated its position on the appointment of minorities, women and lay members on judicial and quasi-judicial boards, committees and commissions as outlined in I(A)(3), above.

D. Dispute Resolutions.

1. The task force recommended and the court has agreed to create an informal, confidential dispute resolution process regarding racial, ethnic, and gender bias misconduct for women and minority judges and attorneys who think judges or attorneys have discriminated against them. The complainants would have the option to use this process before or in lieu of filing formal complaints with the appropriate disciplinary bodies.
2. Prior to submission of the **Final Report** of the task force, the court adopted a sexual harassment policy for employees of the judicial department. This policy includes a process similar to the one recommended by the task force for the processing of sexual harassment complaints or racial, ethnic or gender biased misconduct.

E. Education.

1. The court has directed that training programs for clerks of the district court will provide on a regular basis the following:
 - a. Sex, racial, national origin and ethnic bias; training regarding racial, ethnic and cultural diversity; training regarding the stereotypes which may affect their treatment of litigants.
 - b. Sexual harassment (definition and complaint procedures).
 - c. Equal opportunity within the work force.
 - d. Procedures available for court users to make complaints regarding judges, attorneys and court personnel.
2. The court has directed that training on the subjects described in the preceding paragraph be afforded to all court personnel at least once during their employment. Preferably, such training would be provided on a regular basis.
3. The court adopted a recommendation that a guideline similar to the judicial department's sexual harassment policy be developed listing the sexual and racial/ethnic stereotypes about which court personnel should be watchful in themselves and in others. Court personnel should be encouraged to strive to eliminate the effects of such stereotypes in their treatment of those with whom they come in contact in the court system. The policy should include an admonishment against evaluating or assessing cases, witnesses, litigants, etc., based upon the stereotypes.
4. The court has directed that judges and magistrates be provided educational programs relating to issues of bias on the basis of sex, race, national origin or ethnicity. Specifically, judicial officers should receive training regarding racial/ethnic/cultural diversity, as well as training regarding stereotypes based on race, national origin, ethnicity, or sex, which may affect their treatment of litigants, may lead them to discount certain testimony, and may otherwise affect their decision making.

5. The court decided to encourage the Iowa State Bar Association and other statewide professional organizations to provide educational programs for attorneys related to issues of bias on the basis of sex, race, national origin and ethnicity. Such programs should include the same training as described for judges in paragraph 4, above.

IV. LANGUAGE BARRIERS.

- A. The court adopted a recommendation that financial incentives—such as the award of a merit step or the reimbursement of tuition—should be created to encourage court personnel to develop language capacities needed in each judicial district.
- B. The court adopted a recommendation that bilingual and multilingual persons should be actively recruited to work for the judicial department and such language ability should be recognized as a valuable asset for employment.
- C. The court will establish a small working group to review implementation of the following task force recommendations:
 1. Review recommendations made to the task force by the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), and by the Bureau of Refugee Services of the Iowa Department of Human Services.
 2. Review and make recommendations on the rules governing the qualification and compensation of interpreters.
 3. Review the concept of having a central, comprehensive list of interpreters.

V. JURY SELECTION.

- A. The task force made several recommendations for changes in the jury selection process in Iowa. Most of the recommendations attempt to respond to a concern that in Iowa, where the number of minorities in a given community may be small, every effort must be made to select and to encourage people to serve as jurors, to increase the chances that juries will be racially diverse. The court continues to hold these recommendations for further study.

- B. The court adopted the task force recommendation that the pay for jurors should be increased, but believes the appropriate amount should be set by the legislature.

VI. CIVIL DAMAGES.

- A. The task force recommended that (1) use of race specific or sex specific economic data or expert testimony premised on such data is inequitable, and (2) only race-neutral and gender-neutral economic data be used to evaluate damages in civil cases. The court has referred this recommendation to the Supreme Court Advisory Committee on Rules of Evidence for its response.
- B. The task force recommended that a survey of Iowa jurors be conducted to determine if permissible factors such as gender stereotyping are influencing jury awards and whether the same set of facts governs awards in cases of both male and female injury. Jurors should be asked whether they have considered specific factors (e.g., potential salary increases, continuity of work, child raising responsibilities) in their calculations of lost future earnings and what other factors influenced their judgment (e.g., potential of surviving spouse to remarry, importance of physical appearance to men and women). The task force believes information from jurors is also needed to determine whether homemaker services are being fairly evaluated. Jurors should be surveyed as to whether any portion of the award represented loss of homemaker services and the basis on which such amount, if any, was derived.

The court determined that such a study was beyond current resource capabilities of the judicial department. However, it will seriously consider the results of any such study or studies undertaken by other entities.

- C. The task force recommended that an empirical study of decided cases in Iowa be conducted to determine whether a racial disparity in damage awards exists and to suggest the specific factors (e.g., future earnings, evaluation of pain and suffering) which likely account for the disparity. The court determined that such a study is beyond the current resource capabilities of the judicial department. However, it will seriously consider the results of any such study or studies undertaken by other entities.
- D. Because little is known about the impact of jury instructions on damages in civil cases in Iowa and about the types of evidence admitted to prove the amount of damages, the court adopted a recommendation that a

roundtable discussion—possibly sponsored by the Iowa Trial Lawyers Association and the Iowa Defense Council—including (1) trial judges, (2) attorneys who litigate personal injury cases, (3) members of the Supreme Court Committee on Jury Instructions, and (4) experts (such as economists or annuity brokers) who provide evidence on civil suits be convened to discuss the issue of gender and race equity raised in the task force report.

VII. DOMESTIC RELATIONS.

- A. The task force recommended encouragement of a renewed sensitivity in child custody disputes and enforcement of an equal justice remedy recognizing the rights of both custodial and non-custodial parents. The court has instructed the Director of Education and appropriate education and training committees of the judicial department to incorporate the subject of family law into the judges' conferences on a regular basis. Subjects to be covered include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - 1. The dynamics of child custody.
 - 2. Evaluation of homemaking services.
 - 3. Expenses of child rearing.
 - 4. Techniques for child support collections.
 - 5. Prospects of mature women, long out of the workplace, obtaining satisfactory and remunerative employment.
 - 6. The dynamics of domestic abuse.
 - 7. The value of the services of the woman as wife, mother and homemaker in relation to the division of assets and the awarding of family support and alimony.
 - 8. Improve the sensitivity of judges to the need to give the same consideration to men as to women in child custody matters, and avoid bias in favor of the mother or father.
- B. In an effort to make the function of the legal system more visible to the public, the court adopted a policy to ensure that litigants receive some type of hearing in open court prior to the determination of temporary custody.

- C. The court has referred to its representatives on the Central States Child Support Judicial Council recommendations from the task force that the court study ways to facilitate review of adjustments to awards and ways to make child support enforcement more effective.

VIII. DOMESTIC ABUSE.

- A. In August, 1993, the court established the Supreme Court Task Force on Courts' and Communities' Response to Domestic Abuse. The court gave the task force a five prong charge:

1. Investigate how the Iowa court system is currently responding to increased numbers of domestic abuse cases.
2. Examine ways in which the Iowa courts can work in concert with other community resources to address the widespread problem of domestic violence.
3. Make recommendations to the Iowa Supreme Court for improving judicial access and treatment of domestic abuse cases while efficiently and fairly administering increasing caseloads.
4. Propose possible legislative reform.
5. Propose a statewide plan for implementation of the recommendations and findings.

The task force submitted a final report to the court in August, 1994. (See **Final Report** of the Supreme Court Task Force on Courts and Communities' Response to Domestic Violence) The court presently is reviewing the recommendations made.

- B. The court requested the Pro Se Domestic Abuse Assistance Project implement the following recommendations from the task force:

1. Distribute the Pro Se Domestic Abuse Assistance Project guide regarding the pro se process to all domestic violence shelters and courthouses.
2. Suggest courthouse and party safety measures (in particular, procedures to keep parties separate from each other while waiting for hearings where possible).

3. Develop a bench manual with checklists of considerations for judges to consult in both ex parte and full hearings.
4. Clarify how clerks of the district court can assist pro se litigants and develop uniform policy for judicial department employees to follow in providing assistance to pro se litigants.
5. Develop educational programs for victim advocates regarding the court system, its procedures, and the pro se process.

To date, a guide entitled “**How to Protect Yourself From Domestic Abuse Without a Lawyer**” is available at all domestic violence shelters and courthouses. With assistance from the State Justice Institute (SJI) a benchbook on domestic abuse is now available for Iowa judges, and a new chapter has been added to the **Manual for District Court Clerks** which includes critical information on how clerks’ office employees can assist pro se domestic abuse litigants.

- C. The court adopted new Court Rule 120.1 to provide guidance regarding the appropriate role of victim advocates and others who accompany domestic violence victims into the courtroom.
- D. The court directed the state court administrator to include in the **Annual Statistical Report** the number of pro se domestic abuse filings.
- E. The task force recommended that (1) counsel be made available to pro se litigants, (2) legal services for the poor be fully funded to include representation of indigent domestic violence litigants, and (3) attorneys be encouraged and trained to do their pro bono service in this area. At the request of the court, the Volunteer Lawyers Project of the Iowa State Bar Association has responded with programming to help implement this recommendation.
- F. The court supports educational programming for:
 1. Judges on the dynamics of domestic abuse and what is appropriate for them to do to assist pro se litigants.
 2. Attorneys on the dynamics of domestic abuse and what is appropriate for them to do to assist pro se litigants.
 3. Court personnel on how they can be of assistance to pro se litigants.

During 1993, special programs were scheduled for Iowa judges on both the civil and criminal domestic abuse cases, and special training also was provided to judicial magistrates and clerks of the district court.

- G. The court adopted the task force recommendation that the legislature fund the programs, training and additional personnel necessary to fully implement the pro se process it enacted.

IX. BIAS IN THE CRIMINAL SYSTEM.

- A. Many of the recommendations from the task force regarding bias in the criminal justice system will require the support and cooperation of all entities in the system. Therefore, the court has established a Criminal Issues Committee comprised of representatives from appropriate agencies to collaborate on the implementation of these recommendations. Specifically, the court has charged this committee to:
 - 1. Review the recommendations found at the conclusion of Chapter IX, Bias in the Criminal System, in the Final Report of the Equality in the Courts Task Force, and the data upon which these recommendations are based.
 - 2. Make recommendations to the Supreme Court concerning implementation of the task force recommendations throughout the criminal justice system.
 - 3. Propose possible legislative reform.
 - 4. Propose possible rule changes.
 - 5. Propose a statewide action plan for implementation of its recommendations and findings.
- B. Recommendations to be reviewed by the Criminal Issues Committee include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - 1. The criminal justice system should strive to increase employment opportunities for minorities and women at critical points in the criminal justice system, including county attorneys' staff, pretrial release staff, public defenders and presentence investigators.

2. Presentence investigation officers, parole officers, juvenile court personnel, and others employed within the criminal justice system should receive cultural sensitivity training, and training regarding racial/ethnic and gender bias.
 3. County attorney offices should be required to keep records of the charges on initial arrests, the charges ultimately filed, the arrests they chose not to prosecute, the reasons they chose not to prosecute, and the race and gender of the alleged perpetrators.
 4. The Division of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning should access information, and make it easily retrievable on a uniform statewide basis, regarding the trends and patterns evolving related to the various stages of the criminal process as regard to the race and sex of defendant and crime reporters or crime victims. The court system, including the Department of Corrections, Division of Community Based Corrections, should keep data similar to that used in the criminal case study, as it related to pretrial release, to be made available to the Division of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning.
- C. The court referred to the Advisory Committee on Rules of Criminal Procedure a recommendation that the statutory guidelines found in Iowa Code section 811.2(2) regarding the appropriate criteria to use for determining the conditions of pretrial release be used uniformly. The committee's response has been forwarded to the Criminal Issues Committee.
- D. The court has directed that statutory guidelines in Iowa Code Chapter 907 regarding the appropriate criteria to use for determining sentencing should be incorporated in regular judicial education programming.
- E. The court adopted a recommendation that sensitivity training be provided for judges, attorneys and court personnel regarding racial, ethnic and cultural differences, including the dynamics of domestic violence and sexual assault and the overt and subtle ways bias may manifest itself.
- F. The court directed that the results of the criminal case study conducted by the task force be presented at the June, 1994 judges' conference. Additionally, present and future court system data bases should be monitored periodically, and patterns of racially-associated disparities noted, publicly disseminated, and specifically brought to the attention of judicial districts where disparities occur.

- G. The court referred to the Advisory Committee on Rules of Criminal Procedure for possible changes in Iowa Rule of Criminal Procedure 8(2)(b)(3) a recommendation that criminal defendants be advised that court appointed attorneys will be paid by the state regardless of whether they win or lose the case. They also should be advised that as part of the disposition of their case they will be required to reimburse any court appointed attorney fees as part of their restitution plan. Responses from the committee have been forwarded to the Criminal Issues Committee.

X. CLOSING.

The most important steps to be taken to eliminate bias in the Iowa court system began after the completion of the charge of the Equality in the Courts Task Force. The implementation of the task force's recommendations is crucial to the realization of the goal of providing equal application of the judicial process to all controversies and ensuring that participants do not receive disparate treatment because of sex, race, national origin or ethnicity.

Background information and supporting documentation of the action taken by the supreme court to date is available upon request through the State Court Administrator's Office.

As demonstrated by the court's action to date, many of the task force's recommendations can be implemented by this court acting unilaterally. Others, however, require the efforts and support of individuals and organizations outside the direct control of the court. One area of particular need is the financial resources necessary to implement the recommendations. For FY 95, the court requested \$500,000 to implement task force recommendations. The general assembly responded by appropriating \$150,000. While this was an adequate beginning, the court is requesting \$150,000 for FY 96 and will require additional funding in succeeding fiscal years to fully implement the concepts embodied in the **Final Report** of the task force.

Finally, the court would like to thank the Iowa General Assembly for its assistance throughout this important project. Clearly, this project never would have been undertaken without the financial support provided by the general assembly. Senator Michael Gronstal and Representative Minnette Doderer were valuable members of the task force. Most importantly, the general assembly has been responsive to the recommendations of the task force adopted by the court.